

Home Circle.

TWILIGHT HOUR WITH THE CHILDREN.

MARGARET ARNOLD.

Children do not like to be ignored any better than we do, and they much appreciate it when we mothers have something out of the ordinary arranged for their amusement and entertainment during the twilight hour.

Have you ever tried a simple game like this? Have slips of paper given to each one. Now write on one piece a noun, on another an adjective, another a verb and adverb. Put these in separate piles, verbs by themselves, adjectives by themselves, etc. Let each child draw one of each kind, and form a sentence. I rather think you will laugh. We had one that read: "The green dog sang sadly!" It is instructive, as it teaches the parts of speech, and it is also very funny. Try it, children, and get father and mother interested in it.

Another game is "Grocery Store." One must say: "I keep a grocery store, and I sell s——." Now each one must guess: the one who guesses correctly has the next thing to sell. S—— may mean salt or sugar, or anything usually kept in a grocery store. This game is very easily played and you will be astonished to learn how much your children have observed in grocery stores that you never knew yourself.

Then the little game of "I have a cat." Have you ever tried it? Well, one begins by saying, "I have a cat, and she is an Angelic cat." The first one must describe his cat with a word commencing A; the next one, "I have a cat; she is a Beautiful cat," or any word commencing with B; and so on. When you come to the letters X, Y, and Z, you will have to do some "tall talking," as the boys say.

Then try acting out the names of some books that you have all read or heard about. Or take some of the characters in Mother Goose, and teach the children to personate. It could be done with very little trouble, and calls out some thought at the same time.

Now, mothers, do not say you cannot spare the time to play with the children even an hour when "Tommy has no stockings," and "Susie has no frock," ready for the next day. I know all there is to be done—doesn't every mother know all about it?—but I know too, that the time we spend amusing our children will be treasured in their hearts among their precious thoughts long after we are dead. The childhood joys and memories—God bless our mothers for the twilight-hour games and the twilight-hour talks!

Again, for a change, try "Throwing Light." One leaves the room, and while he is gone the rest of the company select a word, like "kite," for instance; then when he comes into the room you say, "We have a word that rhymes with mite." Then he must guess, and each one can hint mildly what it is like. The word can be "bite." Do not throw light on the word too strongly, but merely insinuate. This is much the same as dumb crambo.

"Loading a Ship," is fun. Tell the party you are bound for China, and if they will help load the vessel with a proper cargo, they can go as passengers. They will put all kinds of merchandise on, but unless the article begins with the first letter of the name, that person cannot go. For instance, if Tim Snow were there, he could put on starch or sugar or salt. Then the next boy may say, "Well if he puts on salt, I'll put pepper," but that boy's name is Jones, so he cannot go; but if he would only promise to send jumping-jacks, he could go. Don't you see?

Often when a few children come in to spend an hour or two, these games may be found very useful, and are mirth-provoking as well as quiet.

Still another amusement is "I am a Man without a Straw." You must rob the broom of fifteen or twenty straws to commence with. Put the straws on the table. One begins by saying, "I am a man without a straw, and I come bringing apples"—or anything commencing with A. The next one repeats all he said, and adds something commencing with B. The next one repeats all said before, and adds something beginning with C. Now, if you omit one article, a straw is stuck in your hair or buttonhole, and then when your turn comes again, you will say, "I am a man with a straw," etc. Some children, after they have played awhile, leave out words purposely, so as to have straws added to their number.

The game of "Buzz" is old, but it pays to revive the old games now and then. You all know what "Buzz" is, but I will describe it. Begin to count, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, buzz, and say "buzz" when the number 7 comes, or any number that has 7 in it, or can be divided by 7. If you forget you are out of the game. Some of the smart ones in arithmetic will silence some of the fathers and mothers quite quickly, because they are pretty sure to forget to say "buzz."

Have you played "Questions and Answers?" Take a sheet of paper and write fifty questions, numbering each question. Now take fifty slips of paper and write a number on each slip from one to fifty; or just as many tickets must be numbered as

you have questions. Ask questions like these; "Who says I am the wittiest? No. 9." Then the one holding the ticket with 9 on it must rise—"I think I am very pretty." "Who wears the largest shoe? No. 12." "Who likes to look in the glass? No. 1." Get your mother, or maybe Bob when he is home on a college vacation, to "make up" some nice funny questions for you. You will like this amusement. I have seen children much interested in it. Of course, these games are for our youngest children, but I find even we old folks enjoy them, too.

Some wet evening, when your mother thinks "to stay at home is best," ask her if you cannot have a tub of water in the kitchen, and play "Bobbing for Apples." Fill the tub nearly full of water, then put in a number of apples. Now, kneel on the floor, put your hands behind you, and keep them there, and try and get an apple in your mouth. Don't scold them mothers, if they should happen to slop over on the floor a bit. Clean water will not make much mess; the long-handled mop is handy, and Joe knows how to use it, don't you Joe?

Another pleasing attraction for the twilight hour, and perhaps the most attractive of all, is having mother tell about when she was a little girl. How strange it is—the halo that hangs about all that mother used to do! She used to do about as her children do now, but there is something so fascinating in her recital of it. Then father can tell of his hairbreadth escapes and perilous exploits, and soon the darkness will gather, and bedtime will come before the children realize it.

Never count the moments lost;
Never mind the time it cost;
Little feet will go astray;
Keep them, mother, while you may!"

DYING AND LIVING.

He who has learned to die in his passions every day, how to die in his pride from hour to hour, who has Christ in each particular thwarting and event of life, he who knows how from the varied experiences of life to bring forth day by day a Christian character, need not fear the grand and final experience of earth to which he is coming. There is no death to those who know how to die beforehand. Those who lay themselves upon Christ and take the experiences of everyday life in the faith of Christ, those who see the will of God in everything that abounds, whether wounding or healing—they have nothing left at the end of life except peace, translation, and the beginning of immortality.—Beecher.

A great deal of stealing is being done that does not go by that name.